

Approved:

**Achievement First Rhode Island, Inc.
a/k/a Achievement First Mayoral Academies
Board Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2013**

Mayor Taveras chaired the March 28, 2013 meeting. Ben Smith recorded the minutes.

Board Members in Attendance: Mayor Angel Taveras, Betty Bernal, Jorge Elorza

Guests: Jacquelyn Mancini, Toby Shepherd, Michael Magee, Mac Farmer, Sandy McCulloch

AF Staff: Reshma Singh, Ben Smith, and Ken Paul

Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy Board (AFPMA) Meeting

1. Call to Order

At 6:19pm, Mayor Taveras called the meeting to order.

Mayor Taveras opened the board meeting for public comment. As no member of the public was present there were no public comments.

2. Global Update – RIMA

Mr. Magee gave an overview of the creation of the mayoral academy law and the RIMA organization. He described the desire for school choice that he saw in the state. He also described the circumstances of Achievement First entering the state the eventual success of that endeavor. He also described stories of some academically challenged Blackstone Valley Prep students that have succeeded through the “high expectations” model, for which his organization has advocated. He stressed the assistance around talent, facilities and political will that is necessary for these schools to succeed.

3. Global Update – RIMA

a. AFPMA Dashboard

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the recent lottery, noting that over 1,150 students applied to the school and that initial estimates suggest that the student body will represent the high-poverty neighborhoods that were the focus of the student recruitment campaign. He also noted that the school has hired 16 of

its intended 24 staff and that 44% are current or native Rhode Islanders.

b. Presentation of Template Principal Report

Mr. Smith gave an overview of that report that principals will present at each board meeting demonstrating the yearly goals for the school and the progress toward those goals.

c. Year One budget development

Mr. Smith provided the board with an example of the executive report and template for the budget updates that the board will be reviewing for each meeting after July. He also discussed the process by which the board will review and approve these budgets, noting that there will first be a board call for discussion, followed by an anticipated approval vote at the meeting scheduled for the end of May. Mr. Smith also discussed the need for a board treasurer, noting that someone from the board will need to volunteer for and be voted into this role prior to the passing of the school's Year One budget.

d. Final Charter Approval and potential board member assistance

Mr. Smith described the final charter approval process that would be voted upon by the Board of Education in early April. Ms. Singh noted that it would be beneficial for the board members to provide either in-person testimony or letters of support. Several board members suggested that they could provide letters of support and would consider coming to the Board of Education meeting if their schedules allowed.

e. Lease overview

The board reviewed the draft lease between the City of Providence and the Achievement First Rhode Island, Inc. for the use of the Oliver Hazard Perry School at 370 Hartford Avenue in Providence. The board also reviewed a financial overview of the construction project budget that is divided into three phases and describes the breakdown of funds between financing and philanthropy. Ms. Singh noted that a board meeting may need to occur by phone in April in order to submit a resolution approving the lease.

4. Board Business

a. Board selection and approval of director candidates Sandy McCulloch and Marta Martínez

The board discussed the nominations of Sandy McCulloch and Marta Martínez to the board. The board members were excited about both candidates and there was enthusiasm by all members for the nominations. The Mayor asked for a motion to approve Sandy McCulloch and Marta Martínez to the board. These board members were the two suggestions of RIMA, though the mayor and his office have agreed with the choices. Judge Elorza moved to appoint both of them to the board and Betty Bernal seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion.

b. Approval of revised by-laws

Ms. Singh clarified the by-law changes, noting that board elects its members and the Achievement First, Inc. board approves them formally. Mayor Taveras stated his belief that the way the board is set up makes their primary function the election of the principal and other oversight matters. Ms. Singh noted that this board has significant oversight capacity and fiduciary responsibility across all aspects of the school and charter. Mayor Taveras agreed that day-to-day management is not the role of the board, and noted that this puts fewer burdens on the members. Mr. McCulloch noted that the by-laws note of one-year terms for Directors may prevent issues of rogue boards, but is glad that oversight is the primary role of the board. Mayor Taveras noted that he wants to see AF be a “game changer” in RI and wants to make sure that the board is working closely to keep the charter on track.

Judge Elorza moved for a motion to approve the by-laws. Mr. McCulloch seconded the motion and all approved

c. Approval of board minutes from January 31, 2013 and February 11, 2013

Judge Elorza moved to approve the minutes from both meetings. Ms. Bernal seconded motion. The board unanimously approved.

5. Deep Dive: Targeting high-needs families in all four communities for future lotteries

The board discussed the initial results of the lottery and Judge Elorza asked why the results were so skewed toward Providence students. Mr. Smith explained that because of the successful collaboration with Providence Public Schools to include Achievement First on their Kindergarten enrollment form, the odds skewed strongly toward Providence students, particularly in Kindergarten. He noted that they hope to discuss ways to have that level of outreach in the other cities when the lottery is held next year. Mayor Taveras suggested that Latino radio can and should be central to any such broad outreach.

Judge Elorza suggested pro-active action and influence from the other Mayors in the coming year. Mr. Paul noted that sibling preference will reduce the number of available seats for new families over the years and, accordingly, the need for strong outreach will be even more important. Mayor Taveras noted that the mayors of the four cities are on board, but that school committees will be more difficult to influence. He noted that there must be alternative plans for outreach. Mr. Smith discussed some of the other avenues considered, including outreach via the State Department of Health, to cover all families. Ms. Bernal said she believes that mobility will not be a huge factor for school enrollment.

6. Adjournment

Judge Elorza moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. The motion was seconded by Sandy. All approved.